

Message Text

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ACTION SY-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 SYE-00 SSO-00 /014 W
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O R 311208Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4171

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

MMSG BN HQ ARLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1409

ADDIS FOR RSO

NAIROBI FOR CO CO "F" AND RSS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, MILI, SO, US

SUBJECT: SOMALI GOVERNMENT TO PNG MSG

REF: MOGADISCIO 1390 AND PREVIOUS

1. SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS DECIDED THAT THE
INVERSON INCIDENT, DESCRIBED REFTELS, CONSTITUTES A "PROVOCATION,"
AND HAS REQUESTED THAT IVERSON BE WITHDRAWN. IN THE EVENT THE
USG DOES NOT WITHDRAW HIM, THE MINISTRY IS PREPARED TO DECLARE
HIM PERSONA NON GRATA. END SUMMARY.

2. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
DR. ABDURAHMAN JAMA BARRE, CONVOKED THE AMBASSADOR AND THE DCM
ON FORTY MINUTES' NOTICE AUGUST 31 TO DISCUSS THE IVERSON CASE.
AS THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL, MARINE SECURITY GUARD ROMBER T W.
IVERSON AND A WEST GERMAN COMPANION TRESPASSED ON SOMALI NATIONAL
SECURITY SERVICE (NSS) PREMISES ON AUGUST 27 AND WERE DETAINED
INCOMMUNICADO FOR 28 HOURS UNTIL RELEASED AT THE URGENT BEHEST
OF BOTH EMBASSIES.

3. ABDURAHMAN SAID HE HAD CALLED IN THE AMBASSADOR TO ASK HIM
TO SEND IVERSON OUT OF THE COUNTRY. THIS REQUEST WAS BASED ON
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INFORMATION IN THE POSSESSION OF THE MINISTRY ACCORDING TO

WHICH IVERSON

AND HIS COMPANION (A) HAD REFUSED AN ORDER TO HALT AT THE NSS GATE, (B) HAD "FORCIBLY" ENTERED THE PREMISES, (C) HAD ELUDED CAPTURE WITHIN THE COMPOUND, AND (D) HAD FLED "AT HIGH SPEED" FROM THEIR NSS PURSUERS. THIS "PROVOCATION" WAS SUFFICIENT TO DECLARE IVERSON PERSONA NO GRATA BUT, "IN THE SPIRIT OF GOOD RELATIONS DESIRED BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS," ABDURAHMAN SAID THE MINISTRY HAD DECIDED TO HOLD BACK FROM THAT ACTION AND WAS ASKING THE AMBASSADOR TO SEND IVERSON AWAY QUIETLY.

4. THE DCM EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT THE MINISTRY'S VERSION OF THE INCIDENT AND SAID THAT HE AND EMBASSY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER GREGORY L. JOHNSON HAD BEEN GIVEN ASSURANCES BY AN NSS OFFICER MANED MOHAMED THAT THE NSS WAS SATISFIED THE INCIDENT HAD BEEN AN "HONEST MISTAKE" AND THAT NO FURTHER ACTION AGAINST IVERSON WAS PLANNED. HE POINTED OUT THE DISPARITY IN THE MINISTRY'S AND IVERSON'S VERSIONS OF THE INCIDENT AND QUESTIONED THE USE OF THE WORD "PROVOCATION" BY THE MINISTRY.

5. THE AMBASSADOR REJECTED ABDURAHMAN'S REQUEST TO SEND IVERSON AWAY BECAUSE THE FACTS OF THE CASE WERE STILL IN QUESTION. HE SAID THE MINISTRY'S ARBITRARY REQUEST WAS HARDLY CONSISTENT WITH PRESIDENT MOHAMED SIAD BARRE'S WRITTEN ASSURANCES THAT THE GSDR WANTED TO IMPROVE BILATERAL RELATIONS AND HE URGED ABDURAHMAN NOT TO PURSUE HIS REQUEST FOR IVERSON'S WITHDRAWAL, AT LEAST UNTIL THE MINISTRY HAD VERIFIED THE FACTS WITH THE NSS OFFICER WHO HAD TOLD THE DCM THAT THE CASE WAS CLOSED. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THE USG WOULD TAKE A "VERY SERIOUS" VIEW OF ANY ARBITRARY ACTION IN THIS CASE.

6. ABDURAHMAN AGREED THAT THE WORD "PROVOCATION" MIGHT BE INAPPROPRIATE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES BUT HE REFUSED TO WITHDRAW HIS REQUEST FOR IVERSON'S WITHDRAWAL. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL SAID HE WOULD DECLARE IVERSON PERSONA NON GRATA IF THE AMBASSADOR DID NOT ACT VOLUNTARILY AND EMPHASIZED THAT THE GSDR ALSO VIEWED THIS AS A VERY SERIOUS MATTER.

7. AS IN ALL DEALINGS WITH ABDURAHMAN, IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHETHER THAT EXTRA TWIST OF THE DAGGER IS BEING APPLIED

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BY ABDURAHMAN FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL REASONS OR FOR REASONS OF SOMALI STATE POLICY. IN THIS INSTANCE, THE FACT THAT AN NSS OFFICER TOLD THE DCM THAT THE CASE HAD BEEN CLOSED SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT ABDURAHMAN IS THE SOURCE OF OUR TROUBLES. NEVERTHELESS, ONCE ABDURAHMAN GETS IT DOWN ON PAPER IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO KEEP IVERSON HERE. THE ONLY HOPE, AND A SMALL ONE AT THAT, MAY BE TO CALL IN SOMALI AMBASSADOR ADDOU TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS: A) PROVOCATION BY AN 18-YEAR-OLD MSG

AND A GIRL COMPANION IS NOT CREDIBALE, B) IVERSON AND THE GIRL
STICK TO THEIR STORY THAT THE TRESPASS ON NSS PREMISES WAS AN
HONEST MISTAKE, C) THEY ALSO DENY FOCIBLE ENTRY AND ANY ATTEMPT TO
FLEE, D) THE GIRL WAS DRIVING THE CAR AND NOT IVERSON, D) THE
NSS OFFICER ACCEPTED THEIR STORY, F) NO DAMAGE WAS DONE AND
SOMALI SECURITY WAS NOT COMPROMISED IN ANY SIGNIFICANT WAY,
G) WHERE THE FACTS ARE IN DISPUTE, FRIENDS OR WOULD-BE FRIENDS
GIVE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT AND, LAST BUT NOT LEAST,
H) THE GSDR WAS AT FAULT IN HOLDING IVERSON, AN ASSISTANT
ATTACHE OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY, INCOMMUNICADO FOR 28 HOURS.
ADDU SHOULD BE ASKED TO COMMUNICATE ASAP WITH GSDR TO TRY
TO HEAD OFF A FORMAL DEMAND FOR IVERSON'S WITHDRAWAL.

8. FYI: IVERSON'S ONE MISTAKE WAS TO GIVE A FALSE NAME
("CHARLIE DANIELS") DURING THE FIRST PART OF HIS INTERROGATION
BY THE NSS. HE DID THIS OUT OF CHILDISH BLUFF, BY HIS OWN
ADMISSION. IN THE INFLAMED STATE OF THE SOMALIS' IMAGINATION,
THIS MAY BE SUFFICIENT GROUNDS TO PNG HIM. END FYI.

9. AT THE TIME OF WRITING
THE FEDERAL GERMAN EMBASSY HAD
NOT HEARD FROM ABDURAHMAN. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HE PLANS TO
DO ABOUT IVERSON'S COMPANION, IF ANYTHING.
LOUGHRAN

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